

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-14 SP-02 PA-01 SAA-01 INR-05
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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5005
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION SINAI
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 10677

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, IS
SUBJECT: DMC COUNCIL REBUFFS YADIN, WEAKENING HIS INFLUENCE
ON BEGIN

REF: TEL AVIV 10497

1. DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER YIGAEI YADIN WAS HANDED A SIGNIFICANT
DEFEAT AUGUST 17 AT THE FIRST MEETING OF THE DMC'S
NEWLY ELECTED COUNCIL, THE PARTY'S SUPREME ORGAN. IN A STORMY,
AT TIMES UPROARIOUS, SESSION, THE COUNCIL NARROWLY DEFEATED
A YADIN-BACKED MOTION TO HOLD ELECTIONS FOR THE PARTY'S
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INSITUATIONS NEXT WEEK. INSTEAD, IT VOTED 59-57 FOR A
PROPOSAL INTRODUCED BY THE MEIR AMIT FACTION AND SUPPORTED BY
SHINUI TO HAVE THE COUNCIL FIRST DEBATE THE PARTY'S
IDEOLOGY AND DIRECTION, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF
REMAINING IN THE GOVERNMENT.

2. AT THE MEETING YADIN AND HIS FOLLOWERS CAMPAIGNED HARD

TO SEW UP THE INTERNAL ELECTIONS NOW AND POSTPONE DIVISIVE DEBATE UNTIL AFTER THE CAMP DAVID SUMMIT, THUS STRENGTHENING YADIN'S HAND IF HE ATTENDS THOSE DISCUSSIONS. THE SHINUI-AMIT PEOPLE ARGUED THAT VOTING ON THE PARTY'S LEADERSHIP SHOULD ONLY COME AFTER A THOROUGH AIRING OF THE ISSUES TROUBLING THE DMC, AGREEING WITH THE YADIN-TAMIR CAMP THAT A DECISION ON REMAINING IN THE COALITION WOULD AWAIT THE RESULTS OF THE CAMP DAVID CONFERENCE. AMIT URGED YADIN TO AVOID MAKING THE VOTE ON THE RIVAL RESOLUTIONS A PERSONAL TEST OF STRENGTH, BUT YADIN, APPARENTLY POORLY ADVISED ON THE SIZE OF THE FORCES ARRAYED AGAINST HIM, SEEMED TO SEEK A CONFRONTATION. DEFEAT OF HIS PROPOSAL WAS CONSEQUENTLY ALL THE MORE EMBARRASSING TO HIM.

3. ADOPTION OF THE DEBATE-BEFORE-ELECTION MOTION WAS A BOOST FOR RUBINSTEIN AND HIS SHINUI FACTION. IN FACT, SHINUI SEIZED ON THE PROPOSAL, INTRODUCED BY THE AMIT FACTION, TO PUT YADIN ON NOTICE THAT A SHINUI-AMIT COALITION HAD THE VOTES TO DEFEAT HIM. HOWEVER, THE CLOSENESS OF THE VOTE REFLECTS A PARTY NOW ALMOST EVENLY DIVIDED ON YADIN'S LEADERSHIP AND PERHAPS ON THE QUESTION OF STAYING IN THE COALITION.

4. COMMENT. AS IS THE CASE IN OTHER ARENAS OF THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE IN THIS COUNTRY, MUCH WILL
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DEPEND ON THE RESULTS OF THE CAMP DAVID SUMMIT. SUCCESS THERE WILL PROBABLY QUIET THE AGITATION FOR LEAVING THE GOVERNMENT. FAILURE WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY MEAN DEFECTION FROM THE COALITION BY THE DMC OR AT LEAST A SPLIT IN THE PARTY. IN THE MEANTIME, IT IS A WEAKENED YADIN WHO MAY PARTICIPATE AT CAMP DAVID, BUT ALSO A YADIN WHO NOW MORE THAN EVER NEEDS A SUCCESS AT THE MEETING TO REAFFIRM HIS OWN POSITION WITHIN THE DMC AND TO HOLD THE PARTY TOGETHER. HOWEVER, THE UNDERMINING OF YADIN'S AUTHORITY AND APPARENT IMMINENCE OF A DMC BREAK-UP HAS REDUCED BEGIN'S INCENTIVE TO SHORE UP YADIN'S POSITION BY BRINGING HIM. BEGIN MAY WELL CONCLUDE THAT YADIN'S POSITION IS BEYOND REDEMPTION, THAT A DMC SPLIT IS NOW INEVITABLE, BUT THAT HALF ITS 15 MKS, LED BY YADIN, WILL PROBABLY STAY IN THE COALITION COME WHAT MAY.
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